



October 16, 2019

### ***A CHURCH FOR LAUGHTER AND TEARS***

*"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.  
... a time to weep, and a time to laugh."  
Ecclesiastes 3:1, 4*

Maybe Paul was remembering the wisdom from Ecclesiastes, that there is a time to weep and a time to laugh, when he wrote these words about being followers of Jesus: "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep." Paul had been through a lot, and he knew how important it is for us to share both the heights and the depths of our lives.

This past week, I had the honor of representing our congregation at two holy and important gatherings. The first was a memorial service, with family and friends who shared their love and grief. The second was a wedding, with friends and family who shared their love and joy for the married couple. A time to weep, and a time to laugh.

On these pivotal days, the ministry of the church is to reveal how our weeping and our laughing are held by a loving and generous God. Through ritual, prayer, and sacred words, the church helps us to understand that our lives are holy; that there is something prayerful and beautiful about our tears and our laughter. The ministry of the church helps us to move from the surface of life into the depths of meaning, where we can experience a divine love that is strong enough to hold us through every sorrow, and to expand every joy.

These ministries make a difference in our lives, and they are worthy of our support. On Sunday, October 27, we will dedicate pledges and commitments of our financial gifts to the church for the year 2020 – because we can be sure there will be more times to weep and more times to laugh, and the church needs to be there for both.

I'll see you in church.

Peace,

Rev. Dr. Matthew Wooster  
Senior Minister